

## COLLOQUY

Word Ways now has a website, [wordways.com](http://wordways.com), which will be maintained by Mike Keith ([domnei@aol.com](mailto:domnei@aol.com)). Readers are invited to suggest items for inclusion. Tentative plans:

- a complete list of Word Ways article titles, indexed by author
- one article from the current Word Ways issue
- a selection of 20 to 50 articles from Word Ways issues a year or more old, to show the span of logology
- challenge problems
- future Word Ways Monograph Series articles (these are too long for Word Ways publication, and uneconomical to publish separately)

Please let the editor know if you do NOT wish to have certain (or any) of your old articles on the website.

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Richard Sabey comments on Susan Thorpe's Colloquy discovery that MATHEMATIZATION as well as MATHEMATICS has the fifth and ninth letters invariant: "I see no improvement here. For a given task, unless the nature of the task entails that a longer word must satisfy the same constraint as must a shorter word, *and more* (e.g. 'longest heterogram'), length is a *demerit*. In type collections in Word Ways...I make a point of writing in shorter words if I can find any."

Jeff Grant writes: "Susan undoubtedly found those nice 'dromes [AFGOIOGFA, ALLENELLA] in Nomenclator Zoologicus, but do you really think that accreditation is appropriate in this kind of article? Personally, I think that it is unnecessary and impractical in what is essentially just a short list of single-word palindromes. If credit is to be attributed for 'discovery' then [I should] also mention Dan Tilque, Michael Vnuk, Harry Partridge, and Dmitri Borgmann, as well as the ROTAVATOR company, the makers of XANAX, and heaven knows who else for the likes of GNIPPING, MALAYALAM, NAURUAN, VELLEVE, etc." How about the following rule? If one receives a previously-unpublished logological item from a living author, mention this in the acknowledgements. For a published item, give the dictionary or other source in which it is found. (For large lists, it is sufficient to collectively note the set of dictionaries from which most words came; however, words from unusual (or unique) sources should be individually labeled.) Known logological provenances can be collectively discussed in the body of the text, or listed in the references; it is not necessary to provide them for each word.



Lionel Simard adds the following to his Anita Akihito account in the May issue:

Acknowledged aesthetic Asian aerialist, Anita Akihito, accentuated athleticism and artistry at Akita's ancient amphitheater. Attractive Anita, appropriately attired, achieved all attempts at accuracy. An awe-struck assemblage audibly appreciated Akihito's acrobatic attributes at another annual appearance. An Akita Acrobatics Academy alumna, Anita annually amuses and amazes aspiring aerialists.

As advertised, an amazing assortment--arduous apparatus, accelerated approaches, audacious ascents, alarming altitudes--aroused an attentive and ardent audience. Alluring and appealing as always, Anita Akihito advanced assertively and assuredly above an anxious arena. As authoritative analyst Akira Ashikaga admitted, "As anticipated, adaptable, assiduous Akihito attested abundant athletic and artful ability. Always alert and aware, Anita attained approval and acclaim, affection and adoration, among additional admirers.

Already an accomplished and authentic aerial artiste, Akihito acts accordingly among apprentice aerialists and adepts alike: absolutely accessible and amiable, animated and affable, always agreeable--an admirable attitude.

In "AEINST+1 Words", NATIVES (on p 149) should have been NAVITES. Jeff Grant writes: "Darryl Francis is obviously using the old OSPD2 (1990). The 3rd edition of OSPD (OSPD3, published in 1996), has been in use in World Scrabble for a few years now. It lists BANTIES, STANINE and ANTSIER, which Darryl has in his Webster's 3rd list, as well as ACETINS and ANTISEX which Darryl hasn't recorded." Rex Gooch notes that Darryl missed ANTWISE, SINAITE and STANKIE in Web 2, as well as a considerable number of OED words (many variant forms): AISMENT, ANEINST, ANTI-SEX, ASTEINE, ATENISM, BEAST-IN, BESTIAN, FEISANT, IESAUNT, INSECTA, INSTEAM, MATINES, NAUSTIE, NEATISH, NIEHSTA, PANTISE, PASTEIN, PTISANE, SAEINTE, SAHTNIE, SAMNITE, SANCITE, SANITIE, SEIANTE, SEIJANT, SEISANT, SEISTAN, SENAITE, SERIANT, SESTAIN, SETHIAN, SMITANE, STIARNE, STIERAN, STYANIE, TALENSI, TANISTE, THISANE, TISSANE, TISGANE, and WASTINE. He also listed many words from dictionaries not considered by Darryl, such as ABIENTS, ACETINS, ADIENTS, AUSTENI, ETIANES, IDENAST, TENIALS from Stedman, and ENTITAS, FESTINA, INSTARE, MISTAEN, NEFASTI, PATIENS, SATTEIN, SHINEAT, SINTEAG, TANASIE, TASSEIN, TINBASE, WEISANT from Chambers. ESTONIA is a well-known proper name. Most of these words will really damage one's Scrabble vocabulary!

O.V Michaelsen notes that Hans Haverman has extended base-26 pi from one to five million digits, discovering that THREE occurs at 1556763 and FIFTY at 2300897 (but still no appearance of EIGHT). Although Mike Keith estimated that 5.7 million digits might well be needed to produce an eight-letter dictionary word, he found ARMAGNAC at 3095146. For details, consult <http://www.total.net/~haver/b26pi.html>.

Rex Gooch responds to Ted Clarke's May Colloquy item: "These remarks are for newcomers to computer searches for ten squares. It is not so difficult, with a 1999 PC, to completely search a word list of, say, two million words overnight. The logic required is nothing that is not obvious: for example when you have placed the second word, you



have determined the first two letters of all subsequent words. However, do not write to the screen very much, for this is very slow, especially under Windows. Also plan to open the word list, read the words, and never touch the disk again except to write ten squares or very near misses (because the disk is thousands of times slower than main memory). The detailed implementation of the overall logic does need some thinking. Curiously, the problems arise with smaller squares, because there are so many, and so many near misses, that you cannot eliminate possibilities at an early stage. Ladders are a tougher proposition: a challenge at the long lengths, and no less so at shorter lengths when you many have a trillion answers. It would be wise to use a modern compiler of a decent standard. QuickBASIC is not suitable."

Jeff Grant recently noticed the word TUUII, an early variant of 'tui', a New Zealand native bird, in the Dictionary of New Zealand English (1997), edited by H.W. Orrman. This word joins the small collection of words (like COOEE) ending in two sets of doubled consonants. Orrman spent half a century compiling this dictionary, which retails for \$150--echoes of James Murray!

"Footwords to Howl, for Solomon" in this issue is Nick Montfort's approximate O-zation of Allen Ginsberg's poem "Footnote to Howl, for Carl Solomon". He writes "Someone asked if it were attentive to the original meaning, line for line, and I replied 'Most of it, word for word'. Instead of calling him Ollon Gonsborg, I decided to blend his name with the Biblical Onan. That's because the Whitmanesque style of the poem is sometimes said to be...self-pleasuring."

Richard Sabey came up with a fourteen-letter word using only two-letter element abbreviations: PrAcTiCaLiTiEs. If the elements must all be different, there are several twelve-letter words such as PaRaCrOsTiCs.

Rex Gooch comments that "Room for Expansion" repeats work reported in "Letter Frequencies and Word Lengths", though that was based on a much larger sample, and gave the comparison with running text. He adds "I am not very happy about the omission of Y as a vowel; the more I think about it, the more I am inclined to say it should always be treated as a vowel, whether as in SILLY or as in YELLOW--they both use the same short I-sound. Think of Yellow like OUArzazate, a town in Morocco, which they spell like that but we spell WA...It would have been good to have comparative results with Y as a vowel, and also to know how many actual words are disqualified by the VCV scheme as prescribed. Some comments seem to ignore the fact that longer words are made of shorter segments. True enough that the human short-term memory is limited to about seven letters, but the reason I can spell antidisestablishmentarianism without breaking sweat is that it consists of well-known segments. Bearing in mind that some suffixes are quite long, the maximum comfortable length for words is correspondingly long. But I wouldn't like to discourage the author, rather encourage further investigation. (The Fibonacci sequence starts 1,1,2,3,...)



Chris Cole writes "The word TATTARRATTAT occurs, as far as I can find, only in Joyce's *Ulysses*. There are many other coined words in *Ulysses* that were not included in the OED, even though the readers clearly read the passage that contained them. For example, a few words away from the use of TATTARRATTAT is the coined word FROSTYFACE. Also, the coined word SNOTGREEN is included in the citation for SCROTUM-TIGHTENING. Neither of these words, nor any of Joyce's many other coinages, are listed in the OED. I reiterate my judgment that TATTARRATTAT violates the OED's own standards for word inclusion, and therefore its inclusion is an error. On the other hand, the single-n spelling QUESTIONAIRE is included in the Third International for good and sufficient reason. I quote from some recent correspondence with John Morse, Executive Editor at Merriam-Webster:

The citations for the single-n 'questionnaire' include a letter from the Superintendent of Education for the state of Vermont from 1908, a passage from Fowler (1926) advocating the single n (both of these cites really attesting to the newness of the word), a couple of citations from a 1920's issue of Scientific American (clearly not typos), a cit from a 1926 biography of Darwin, a couple of notes about its appearance in an issue of Diseases of the Nervous System from 1945, a cit from the N.Y. Clipper(?) from 1920, and one from Commercial Fisheries Abstracts from 1960...My guess is that the instability of the spelling was most in evidence in the early part of the century, when the word was still relatively new, but that it persists at a low level even today.

I can back up this judgement with the statistics that, depending upon the search engine used, between five and ten percent of all Web usages of the word use the single-n spelling. Many of these citations are in prominent places such as page titles, where misspellings are very unlikely. Therefore, in all likelihood there is a small but persistent subpopulation that views this spelling as a variant. This justifies its inclusion in the Third, and therefore in my book."

IRichard Sabey corrects a statement in the middle of p 48 of "Word Kayles and Dawsonword": F can convert the value 3 to 0, by splitting a 3-chain into two 1-chains. On the same page, insert the missing phrase "call it Dawson's Kayles" after 1982.

In "Stalking the Silent Letter" in Kickshaws, Jeff Grant fills the Q gap with pontacQ (a type of wine in Web 2) and the V gap with bevVy (an alcoholic drink, under 'beverage' in the 1998 Chambers). In "Fragmented Word Ladders", Susan Thorpe found the following 22-word example: PAPP (see 'pap' Web 2)-RAPP-RAIP-RAIR-PAIR-PAIP-PALP-PALI-PALL-PAIL-BAIL-BALL-BALI-BALT-BAIT-BAPT (see 'bap' Web 3)-BART-BARI-BARD-PARD-PARI-PART. The "Interdefinitional Word Ladder" is REDE-REDD-REED-READ.

In "The Pangram Film Festival", Douglas Fink's address should have been Monroe CT. The "9 to 5" film list should include PJ, not PF, and the "35 Up" list omitted the film 10. Richard Sabey writes "I've just started seeking my own 26-letter pangram line-ups. Just 600 or so titles allow more than 10000 line-ups, and that's just using one one-volume



reference work--clearly there is much more for me to find...Even at this early stage, I have line-ups that don't need IQ, Q&A, McQ or Q."

More comments on the readability of Word Ways:

Richard Sabey: I appreciate that puzzles has always been part of Word Ways, but is it necessary to devote [9 pages to them in February]? There are plenty of puzzle magazines already; Word Ways is the worse, the more like a puzzle magazine it becomes. The strength of Word Ways lies in its articles showing the results of research: either giving us readers a new idea, or improving on earlier results. Naturally an article presenting a new idea will give examples. Some lists of examples of a phenomenon have been rather long; perhaps authors need to winnow the results of their research more?

Tony Augarde: In general the magazine is very readable but I am put off by writers who use recondite jargon or loads of impenetrable statistics. Despite occasional descents into pretentiousness, I find Word Ways indispensable.

Michael Morton: I find some articles denser than others, but don't have any trouble overall.

Jeff Grant: Rest assured, I do follow most Word Ways articles! And some of those I don't persevere with, I probably could follow with more effort. The mathematically-oriented ones don't appeal to me so much...my real interest is in 'pure' wordplay forms like palindromes, anagrams, word squares, pangrams, word surgery, etc.

Enoch Haga: I sometimes feel like a kid who walks into the middle of a movie: "What the hell is going on?" Many times an author launches into an article without clearly defining what it is about and where it may lead. The impression is that this is an 'insider' publication requiring some esoteric initiation rites in order to properly interpret the content...The index of past Word Ways articles on the Internet should be augmented with one-line statements of what each article is about. Perhaps you could come up with a list of index terms categorizing articles by type.

Susan Thorpe: My comments [concerning readability of articles] will be clearer to understand [if I summarize] what I aim at when producing an article: (1) I choose topics covering a wide variety of wordplay, (2) I try to choose topics about which little or nothing has been [written], or from a new angle, (3) I feel strongly about thorough researching, word sourcing and acknowledging, (4) I like to end with some 'punch' item, (5) an article should visually stimulate the reader [so] layout is important, (6) I like to offer the reader a challenge...[Some] will submit their comments to Colloquy... It comes as a bonus when one's article inspires another contributor to write an article themselves.